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2D NOESY Spectra of a Synthetic Siloxane Oligomer with Selective Esterase Activity

by

Patricia L. Jackson and D.G. Gorenstein
Department of Chemistry
Purdue University
West Lafayette, IN 47907

Slawomir Rubinsztajn, Wilmer K. Fife and Martel Zeldin

Department of Chemistry
Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis
1125 East 38th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46205

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2D NOESY NMR Spectra of a Synthetic Siloxane Oligomer with Selective Esterase Activity

Patricia L. Jackson*, Slawomir Rubinsztajn[†], Wilmer K. Fife[†], Martel Zeldin[†] and David G.
Gorenstein*

*Department of Chemistry
Purdue University
West Lafayette, Indiana 47907

[†]Department of Chemistry
Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis
1125 East 38th Street
Indianapolis, Indiana 46205
April 29, 1992

One of our laboratories has recently shown that an oligomer (MW~ 3500, 1) containing 4-dialkylaminopyridine groups incorporated within a bis-(trimethyleneamine)disiloxane backbone (Figure 1a) has remarkable catalytic activity in the hydrolysis of p-nitrophenyl alkanoates.¹ This oligomer exhibits Michaelis-Menten kinetics for lipophilic substrates and demonstrates enzyme-like specificity for esters derived from acids of moderate chain length (C₁₂ → C₁₆) with p-nitrophenyl tetradecanoate (C₁₄) as the optimal substrate. The origin of this catalytic activity and specificity is, as yet, unknown. In this report we describe a 2D NMR study which provides some clues as to the structure of a substrate model-oligomer complex as well as the origin of the chain-length specificity for substrates.

In an effort to determine the structure of its catalytically "active" conformation, the oligomer 1 was studied in mixed micellar aggregates with product inhibitor surfactants. Myristoleic acid, (cis-9-tetradecanoic acid, 2) (Figure 1b), readily solubilized 1 and presumably formed a mixed micelle or other aggregate in methanol/water (1:1 by volume) with the oligomer.¹⁻³ The NMR of both the cis and trans forms of 2 as well as other long chain surfactants were comparable but only the results from studies with the cis isomer are reported here. The presence of the double bond has proven to be very useful in allowing us to assign NMR signals in the hydrophobic interior region of the surfactant/oligomer aggregate.

Samples were prepared by adding 5.0 mg (0.02 mmol) of 1 to 0.50 mL CD₃OD, followed by the addition of 8.6 mg (0.038 mmol) of 2 (Aldrich). D₂O (0.50 mL) was then added to make the solution 1:1 in methanol-water. A white colloidal suspension formed immediately. This colloidal solution gave broad ¹H NMR signals for both 1 and surfactant with short T₁ values (see below)

tive information. Thus, the vinylic protons of the fatty acid appear to be in closest spacial proximity to the siloxane methyl groups. At the same time the siloxane methyl protons are also closest to the N, M and Q methylene protons of 2. (We do not see crosspeaks to the L and P methylenes at short mixing times, confirming the specificity of these interactions.) Unless the conformation of the surfactant polymer complex is heterogeneous, it is difficult to see how these siloxane methyl protons can be simultaneously close to all of the indicated methylene protons in an extended chain conformation of the surfactant. A ROESY spectrum of the complex was also acquired to rule out the possibility that the intermolecular crosspeaks were due to chemical exchange (data not shown). Since the ROESY crosspeaks had opposite phase to the diagonal they are not attributable to chemical exchange effects.⁷

Within the complex it is expected that the charged carboxylic acid and polar pyridinium rings will be closest to the surface, with the hydrophobic siloxane methyl and other methylenes of both 1 and 2 intertwined in the interior. Based upon the simple siloxane repeating unit of 10 atoms, it is not possible to arrange an extended form for both the oligomer and the surfactant chain (15 atoms). As in simple hydrocarbons, phospholipid bilayers, and long chain hydrocarbon polymers, the anti conformation about the C-C bond is preferred, and most hydrocarbon chains will largely be in a time-averaged extended form with only a few gauche conformations.¹⁰ Importantly, protons on the pyridine ring show intermolecular crosspeaks to the long chain methylene region of the fatty acid. This is inconsistent with the picture of a surface pyridine ring and a single siloxane unit binding to a single long chain fatty acid. One solution to these inconsistencies is suggested in Figure 1, where we have juxtaposed 1.5 siloxane units (15 atoms long) with the 15 heavy atom-long chain of 2. This arrangement can now explain the simultaneous proximity of siloxane methyls to both the surface and interior protons of the surfactant and in addition explain the proximity of the pyridine protons to the interior methylenes of 2. This proposed model for intermolecular interactions and association requires that every other pyridine ring is buried within the hydrophobic core of the micelle. Indeed we find that only ca. half of the pyridines in 1 can be titrated with strong acid.

Although other intermolecular NOEs have been observed in mixed micelles¹¹⁻¹³ and mixed polymer-polymer blends at high concentration in non-aqueous solution,^{8,14,15} the uniquely informative NOESY distance information that is observed in the siloxane-surfactant complex may explain the remarkable enzyme-like chain length specificity for catalysis of C-14 fatty acid esters. Thus, a shorter or longer chain in a fatty acid substrate may not as readily match the heavy atom chain length of the 15-carbon atom repeating unit shown in Figure 1.

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Figure Legends

Figure 1. Structure of myristoleic acid, **1** (top) and disiloxane oligomer, **2** (bottom). The repeating oligomeric unit is shown in parentheses. Protons are labeled and arrows represent some of the intramolecular and intermolecular NOESY crosspeaks observed for the mixed micellar aggregate.

Figure 2. Expanded 2D pure absorption phase NOESY NMR spectrum (50 ms mixing time) of the myristoleic acid/disiloxane oligomer complex in CD₃OD/D₂O (1:1). Spectrum taken on a Varian VXR 500 MHz spectrometer at 22° C. Peaks marked with X represent impurities or smaller unassociated components.

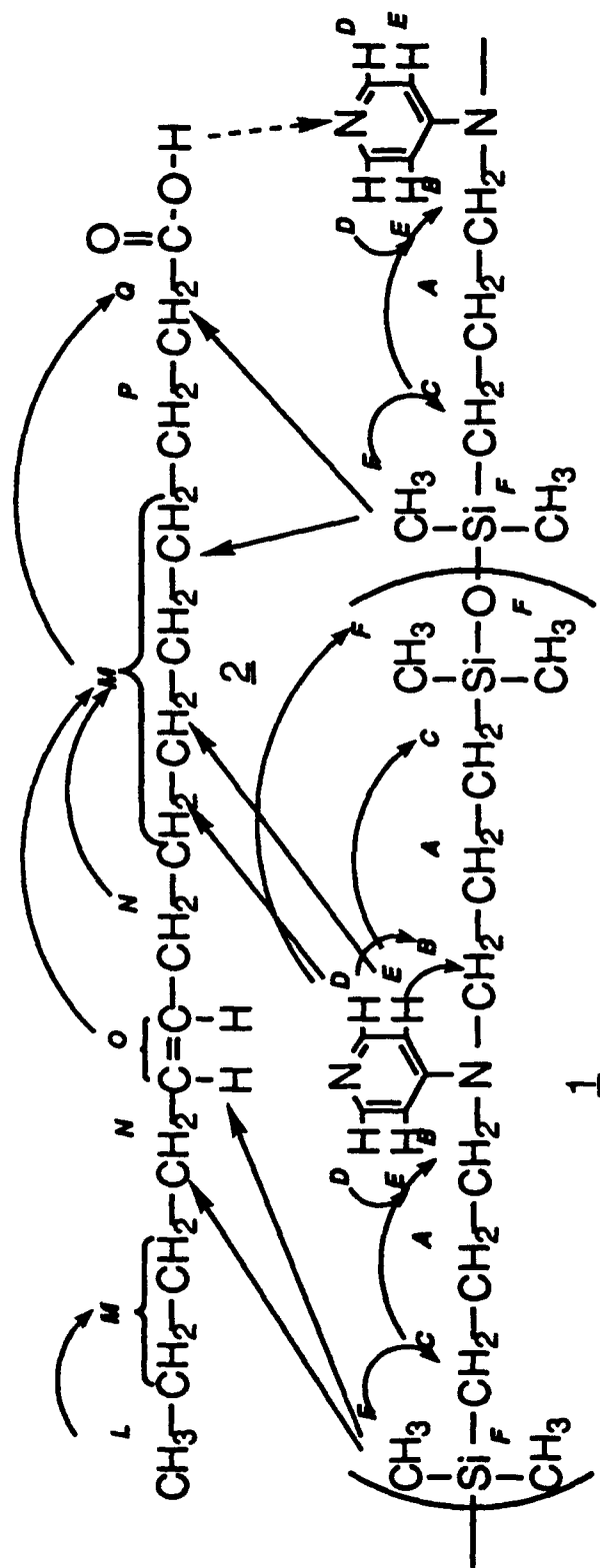


Figure 1

Figure 2

